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NOTES AND NEWS

The meeting of the Department of Superintendence of the National Educational Association will be held in Washington, D. C., February 25, 26, and 27, 1908. The new Willard Hotel will be the headquarters of the department. The prospect is reported as excellent for the largest meeting of the department yet held.

A second edition of 100,000 copies of the small primer, *Elements of Esperanto*, setting forth the grammar, word-construction, and purpose of the language, has been printed for free distribution. A copy will be mailed to any person who requests it, sending stamp for postage. Address Arthur Baker, Editor *Amerika Esperantisto*, 1239 Michigan Ave., Chicago.

Indiana has established a pension fund for teachers in every city in the state with a population of 100,000 or more. Part of this is to be raised by a tax on teachers' salaries, part by gift, and part by a special tax on the citizens. Any teacher who ceases to teach in the schools of Indiana before becoming qualified for the pension list, may expect to have one-half of the tax which he has paid refunded.

At the meeting of the St. Louis Board of Education held November 12, 1907, a report was made by Superintendent Soldan on the advisability of establishing schools for special instruction, wherein children who are mentally defective can receive needed attention. The recommendations with which the report closes were adopted without alteration and are now being carried into execution. They are as follows:

(a) It is recommended that six rooms for the reception of defective children be secured, and that the Secretary be authorized, upon recommendation of the superintendent, and with the consent of the finance committee, to rent three buildings for this purpose.

(b) It is recommended that the building commissioner be authorized to fit up these buildings for the purpose contemplated by this report and make the proper provision for heating and toilet accommodations.

(c) It is recommended that the supply commissioner be authorized to provide the necessary furniture, and such books and supplies, including carfare, as may be recommended by the superintendent of instruction.

(d) It is recommended that in due time the superintendent of instruction submit to the board of education the names of the teachers, supervisors and attendants who are to fill the positions created by the adoption of this plan, at salaries not exceeding those named in the above estimates.

(e) It is recommended that the superintendent of instruction submit to the board of education the name of a physician in good standing to fill the office of medical adviser, at a salary not exceeding the rate of \$2,500 per year, such appointment being probationary.

THE SCHOOL REVIEW

A new course of study for the elementary department of the Los Angeles schools was adopted in June, and in it an effort has been made to cut away the useless parts, and to make it thoroughly practical throughout. Much of the traditional part of arithmetic has been omitted in order that more time can be given to securing accuracy and facility in the numerical operations and insight into the application of these operations to the real situations in life, about which children ought to know. More attention is paid to spelling and to penmanship than before. Important modifications in the knowledge subjects of history and geography have been made. The course attempts to point out the essentials of these subjects as determined by the demands of the social whole, for abundant and effective entrance into which the schools are preparing the children. With the conviction that instruction in morality is the most important part of schoolwork, a course in the fundamental virtues is introduced, to the end that no child may go forth from the schools without having had the lessons of honesty, uprightness, and honor impressed upon him. And, being persuaded that all these things are of no avail unless the mind be habituated and trained to keep the body strong, provision for daily lessons in the proper methods of walking, sitting, standing, and breathing is made, that the schools may not fail to do their work of ministering to the health of the children in them.

An innovation of especial value has been the appointment of emergency teachers. In June, 1906, six regular teachers were appointed as such emergency teachers, their duties being "to take charge of classes in the temporary absence of the regular teacher, and to assist wherever they may be needed when not engaged in that work." The plan has been continued this year with marked success.

The superintendent of schools personally took charge of a class in the theory of education, which was attended by the principals of the city schools. The class was held once a week, and Bagley's *The Educative Process* was used as a text.

During the past year, the school nurses have done most earnest and effective work in guarding against the spread of contagious diseases.

Much attention has also been given to the examination of children with a view to detecting defective eyesight and hearing, and other abnormalities. Mr. George Leslie was employed as supervisor of this work.

The Child Labor Law has been vigorously enforced during the past year, the commissioner of labor, from his headquarters in San Francisco, sending his officers to all parts of the state, to personally superintend the enforcement of the law. Arrests of employers have in some cases been made, though in general those who employ children have fallen into the spirit of the law, and are careful to employ no child under fourteen years of age, and none under sixteen without permit. Mr. Ernest J. Lickley, principal of the Parental School, who has had charge of the issuing of labor permits, has been

NOTES AND NEWS

most conscientious and thorough in his efforts to prevent these permits being fraudulently obtained by children under the required age.

Public playgrounds are maintained at four of the schools, and are kept open and cared for by teachers of the respective schools after school hours and on Saturdays. During vacations, the Playground Commission has charge of the playgrounds, and does much for the children of the poorer districts.

In an effort to reach individual pupils who are working at more or less disadvantage in the grades, twenty-two ungraded classes have been established and are maintained as centers, to which boys and girls needing individual teaching and discipline may be sent. This work is under the efficient management of Mr. Bettinger, assistant superintendent of schools, who has given many years of study to the problems affecting child-life.

In addition to the twenty-two special ungraded rooms, there are four special classes for truants. These special schools are placed in charge of young men whose aim in management is to make the school life of the boys as far as possible like real life outside of school, the theory being that if

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school is made like life, boys will like to go to school for the same reason that they like to live. The theory and plan work so well that the percentage of attendance in these schools averages 99 as against 94 in the regular graded classes.

The board of education maintains a school in the Juvenile Detention Home. This school affords instruction for boys whose cases are pending in the Juvenile Court. A Parental School building is, however, now in process of erection. The buildings are located on a tract of land consisting of eleven acres, and when the plant is finished, it will be the most completely equipped school of its kind in the West. To this school will be sent, by the superintendent of city schools, persistent truants only. The methods employed in this school will be almost entirely remedial, rather than preventive.

The schools of Washington occupy 150 public buildings and additional rented quarters, involving current annual expenditures of \$27,500. Nearly ten thousand first- and second-grade children are on half-time.

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